



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
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TO : Victor Restrepo

FROM : Larry Beerkircher,  
Pelagic Observer Program

SUBJECT: Third quarter (2008) observer coverage summary.

The Pelagic Observer Program (POP) achieved a 7.2% overall coverage rate for the third quarter period of 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Selection letters were sent by certified mail service (return receipt) on June 15, 2008 to 46 vessel permit holders (owners and/or operators) who were selected for coverage based on fishing activity in the northwestern Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico for notification of observer coverage. The POP had the responsibility of the regular coverage requirement in the Northwest Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico as well as, during a part of this quarter, responsibility for deploying observers on board 2 vessels fishing experimental gear in the Gulf of Mexico. In general this report will only cover regular fishery effort (i.e. only non-experimental coverage); however experimental effort and any associated incidental take will be shown in a table.

Of special note, there were two (2) vessels (Adam C and Daytona) selected for coverage in Quarter 2 (2008) which had fishing effort in both Quarter 2 and Quarter 3. Further, there were three (3) vessels (Peaceful Lady, Capt Mike, and Eagle Eye) selected for coverage in Quarter 3 but had fishing effort in both Quarter 3 and 4. For the purposes of this quarterly report, vessel hauls beginning on or after July 1 and up to and including September 30, along with any incidental takes observed during this



quarterly period (number of sets observed, days at-sea, animals caught) will be included in this summary. Overall during this quarter, observers spent 311 days at sea on 25 fishing vessels, which resulted in 210 hauls observed and a coverage rate of 7.2%. During the 28 observed trips (Tables 1 and 2), set effort occurred in the geographical areas of the Gulf of Mexico (GOM), the Florida East Coast (FEC), the Mid Atlantic Bight (MAB), the Northeast Coastal (NEC), and the Northeast Distant (NED).

During the regular fishery pelagic longline trips covered by observers, a total of 178,969 hooks were fished. The total catch observed consisted of 7,762 fish representing 43 species of fish. The catch data was comprised of 2,166 swordfish, 299 bigeye tuna, 1039 yellowfin tuna, 35 bluefin tuna, 67 albacore tuna, 168 other tuna species, 226 dolphin fish (mahi), 30 wahoo, 180 billfish species, 277 other finfish (escolar, lancetfish, etc.), 669 skates/rays, 1 small coastal shark, 267 large coastal sharks, and 227 pelagic sharks. During the quarter, observers also recorded incidental takes of protected species (Table 3) which included 88 sea turtles (19-leatherback-alive, 2-leatherback-dead; 67-loggerhead-alive), in addition to 10 marine mammals (5-pilot whale-alive, 3-Risso's dolphin-alive, 1-beaked whale-alive, 1-bottlenose dolphin-alive) and 0 seabirds. No sawfish catches during the quarter; this species is not likely to occur in the pelagic environment. Table 4 shows effort during GoMex experimental fishing (experimental effort); no incidental take during this fishery was observed in Quarter 3.

During the quarter, the POP did not place observers on 25 of 46 of these vessels selected (38%, Table 5); thus reducing the target coverage of the POP by 141 sets. However, it should be noted that coverage of many of these vessels was made difficult by the impact of hurricanes both to the fishing industry as well as the observers. For example, the POP has three observers who live in the Houston/Galveston TX area who were significantly affected by Hurricane Ike and one observer who lives in Houma LA who was significantly affected by Hurricane Gustav. The result was that each of these observers had to take a month of time off; these 4 observers represent almost half of the POP's full time observers. There were nine selected vessels listed in Table 5 as not being covered due to no observer being available or not fishing due to hurricane impacts. These vessels reduced the POP's coverage

opportunities by a minimum of 43 sets. Five vessels did not conduct pelagic longline fishing operations during the quarter and the remainder (eleven vessels) did not take an observer due to lack of a safety decal, inadequate bunk/liferaft capacity, or poor communication with the POP office.

In keeping with the BO reporting requirements from the POP office, observers filled out the turtle handling and release gear forms on all of the 25 third quarter covered vessels (including Gulf of Mexico experimental fishery vessels). Of the vessels selected and observed in Quarter 3, 100% of the vessels had the equipment needed for removing gear from turtles in the water (at least 3 of 4 items aboard), and 100% had most of the equipment for removing gear if the turtle is boated (6 or more items aboard). Additionally, 72% of the observed vessels also had the turtle tether aboard, which is voluntary at this time. A PDF document of the observer turtle gear forms will be posted on a secure site of the POP website. Finally, the cumulative number of unique vessels observed since the effective date of the sea turtle conservation regulations (July, 2004), now stands at 99 vessels covered (Table 6).

Attachments:

Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

cc: The POP office files; Matt Clark, NOAA-Fisheries SERO/OLE liaison.

Table 1: Regular coverage (8%) of the longline fleet. Number of vessels observed, areas of fishing activity, total hauls observed, and total days-at-sea conducted by the SEFSC Miami Laboratory POP from July 1 to September 30, 2008.

	Vessel Name	Trip Number	Area	Total Hauls	Total Sea Days
1022773	EAGLE EYE II	P04004	MAB/NEC	17	22
1026595	WHITEWATER	D04056	NEC	17	22
532569	SENECA	S01103	NED	12	19
541694	EAGLET II	T02046	MAB	5	8
541694	EAGLET II	T02047	MAB	7	10
596805	MARY ANN	J02078	MAB	8	11
597797	BLUEFIN	S01102	MAB	12	17
604915	FRANCES ANNE	D05005	NEC	10	15
628300	BIGEYE	T02045	NEC	11	19
633432	KELLY ANN	D05006	FEC	7	13
656259	KRISTIN LEE	U04002	FEC	1	4
656259	KRISTIN LEE	U04003	FEC	6	9
656259	KRISTIN LEE	U04004	FEC	9	12
669872	EAGLE EYE	T03006	NED	7	11
902748	WHITEWATER II	D04005	NEC	7	10
908223	SHADY LADY	D04055	MAB/NEC	10	14
911014	PEACEFUL LADY	P01140	GOM	4	5
919799	BLUE SEA I	X03010	GOM	11	17
926359	QUEENSLAND	P01139	GOM	12	19
929813	CAPT BOB	D05003	MAB/NEC	11	14
936041	CECILIA II	P01138	GOM	8	10
947927	BJORN II	J02079	MAB/NEC	9	13
MD9128BD	ADDIEBYRD	D05004	MAB	5	7
NJ4755FP	BACKWASH III	J02081	MAB	1	3
NJ5951GY	D&S EXPRESS	J02080	MAB	3	6
905679	CAPT MIKE	J02082	GOM	0	1
TOTAL		26		210	311

Table 2: Experimental effort observed in the Gulf of Mexico. Number of vessels observed, areas of fishing activity, total hauls observed, and total days-at-sea conducted by the SEFSC Miami Laboratory POP from July 1st to September 30, 2008.

Vessel Name	Trip Number	Area	Total Hauls	Total Sea Days
507646 DAYTONA	S01101	GOM	9	11
297535 ADAM C	J02077	GOM	2	4
TOTAL	2		11	15

Table 3: Percent coverage (by hauls), the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for July 1 to September 30, 2008 during regular fishing operations.

(A=Alive, D=Dead, U=Unknown. LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, O=other)

AREA	TOTAL HAULS OBSERVED	REQUIRED 8% COVERAGE	TURTLES			MAMMALS		BIRDS	
			A	D	U	A	D	A	D
			LB/LH/O						
GOM-2	35 (2.8%)	101	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
FEC-3	23 (13.1%)	14	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
SAB-4	0 (0.0%)	13	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
MAB-5	55 (8.0%)	55	2/	0/0	0	0	5	0	0
NEC-6	78 (22.3%)	28	17/	39/0	2	0	5	0	0
NED-7	19 (8.4%)	18	0/	28/0	0	0	0	0	0
OFFSHORE	0 (0.0%)	5	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0
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TOTAL	210 (7.2%)	234	19/	67/0	2	0	10	0	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	30,306
FEC	10,820
MAB	48,578
NEC	73,485
NED	15,780
TOTAL	178,969

Table 4: Percent coverage (by hauls), the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for July 1 to September 30, 2008 during experimental fishing operations.

(A=Alive, D=Dead, U=Unknown. LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, O=other)

AREA	TOTAL HAULS OBSERVED	TURTLES			MAMMALS		BIRDS		
		A	D	U	A	D	A	D	
		LB/LH/O							
GOM-2	11	0/ 0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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TOTAL	11	0/ 0/0	0	0	0	0		0	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	5,865
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TOTAL	5,865

Table 5: Listing of selected vessels that were not covered by Pelagic Observer Program (POP) during Quarter 3, 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Short explanations provided. Vessel non-compliance of observer coverage may be based on more than one category of explanation. The following categories are provided: (1)No bunk available;(2)Observer presence exceeds the liferaft capacity;(3) Lack of current CFVSE decal; (4)No communication with observer office/staff; (5)Not fishing (involved in another fishery);(6)Not fishing (new owner, repair, sunk, no permits); and (7)other.

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Doc #</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
BLUEFIN	925122	Reason 6. Certified letter received. Owner contacted POP to say that vessel would be out of the water for repairs during most of quarter. POP requested 5 sets for the quarter. Logbook submissions: departure reported on 7/6 (selection letter had not arrived yet).
BODY COUNT	NC8831WR	Reason 7. Certified letter received. Owner contacted POP on several occasions; when an observer was scheduled to be deployed, the approach of hurricane Ike threatened observer's home and the trip was aborted. However, owner offered to take an observer on a voluntary trip during the next quarter. Observer was deployed on 10/8. POP requested 2 sets for the quarter.
BOOKIE	539456	Reasons 3 and 4. Certified letter received. POP requested 7 sets for the quarter. Departures reported on 4/5, 8/23, 9/6. Vessel also selected for Q4 and observer was deployed on 10/13.



Table 5 (continued): Listing of selected vessels that were not covered by Pelagic Observer Program (POP) during Quarter 3, 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Short explanations provided. Vessel non-compliance of observer coverage may be based on more than one category of explanation.

The following categories are provided: (1)No bunk available;(2)Observer presence exceeds the liferaft capacity;(3) Lack of current CFVSE decal;(4)No communication with observer office/staff;(5)Not fishing (involved in another fishery);(6)Not fishing (new owner, repair, sunk, no permits); and (7)other.

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Doc #</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
CAPTAIN MICHAEL	610006	Reason 6. Certified letter received. Vessel did not fish during selection period. POP requested 6 sets for the quarter.
CAPT. LUU	668316	Reason 7. Certified letter received. Owner called the POP with advance notice, and trip was scheduled, but approach and aftermath of Hurricane Gustav resulted in vessel not fishing for entire month. An observer was deployed on the vessel on 10/3. POP requested 7 sets for the quarter. Departures reported 7/3, 7/27.
CHARLESTON STAR	591301	Reason 3. Certified letter received. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter. Vessel departure reported 7/15, 8/9, and 8/16.
DEFIANCE	630306	Reasons 1, 2. Certified letter received. Observer presence would exceed life raft and bunk capacity. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter. Departures reported 7/11, 7/27, 8/5, 8/12, 9/3.

Table 5 (continued): Listing of selected vessels that were not covered by Pelagic Observer Program (POP) during Quarter 3, 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Short explanations provided. Vessel non-compliance of observer coverage may be based on more than one category of explanation.

The following categories are provided: (1)No bunk available;(2)Observer presence exceeds the liferaft capacity;(3) Lack of current CFVSE decal;(4)No communication with observer office/staff; (5)Not fishing (involved in another fishery);(6)Not fishing (new owner, repair, sunk, no permits); and (7)other.

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Doc #</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
FINALLI	NC5126DC	Reason 7. Certified letter received. No observer available. POP requested 2 sets for the quarter. Took observer on voluntary trip during quarter 4. Vessel reported departures on 7/13, 7/21, 8/4, 8/8, 9/12.
HATUNA MATATA	586413	Reason 4 and 6. Certified letter received. Owner called in middle of quarter to say vessel was for sale and might not fish, however, vessel made two trips early in quarter. POP requested 8 sets for the quarter. Vessel reported departures on 7/11, 8/3.
JANICE ANN	646506	Reasons 1, 4, 7. Certified letter received. No observer available for one departure, but there were other trips where no notification was given the POP. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter.
KIM THANH PN	937416	Reason 7. Certified letter received. Approach and aftermath of Hurricane Gustav prevented vessel from fishing for much of quarter. POP requested 8 sets for the quarter. Vessel departure 5/6, 7/30.

Table 5 (continued): Listing of selected vessels that were not covered by Pelagic Observer Program (POP) during Quarter 3, 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Short explanations provided. Vessel non-compliance of observer coverage may be based on more than one category of explanation.

The following categories are provided: (1)No bunk available;(2)Observer presence exceeds the liferaft capacity;(3) Lack of current CFVSE decal;(4)No communication with observer office/staff; (5)Not fishing (involved in another fishery);(6)Not fishing (new owner, repair, sunk, no permits); and (7)other.

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Doc #</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
LINNEA C	665962	Reasons 1, 3. Certified letter received. No bunk for observer or current CFVS decal. POP requested 9 sets for the quarter. Vessel departures reported 7/12, 8/3.
MARY B	MS1284AR	Reason 4. Certified letter received. No communication from vessel. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter. Vessel departures reported 7/24, 8/5, 8/18.
MISS PATTY	587528	Reason 7. Certified letter received. No observer available. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter. Vessel reported departures on 7/13, 8/1, 8/14, 9/8.
MOONRAKER	574894	Reason 7. Certified letter not received. POP attempted many times via regular mail and Fedex to inform permit holder of selection. POP requested 5 sets for the quarter. Vessel reported departures on 8/4, 8/18, 8/31, 9/18.

Table 5 (continued): Listing of selected vessels that were not covered by Pelagic Observer Program (POP) during Quarter 3, 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Short explanations provided. Vessel non-compliance of observer coverage may be based on more than one category of explanation.

The following categories are provided: (1)No bunk available;(2)Observer presence exceeds the liferaft capacity;(3) Lack of current CFVSE decal;(4)No communication with observer office/staff; (5)Not fishing (involved in another fishery);(6)Not fishing (new owner, repair, sunk, no permits); and (7)other.

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Doc #</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
MOTHER CAT	1114578	Reasons 6. Certified letter received. Owner called POP to inform that vessel had been sold into another fishery. POP requested 10 sets for the quarter.
PROVIDER	588064	Reason 4. Certified letter received. No communication from vessel. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter.
REBOUND	697038	Reasons 6. Certified letter received. Owner called POP to inform that vessel had been sold into another fishery. POP requested 3 sets for the quarter.
SEAHAWK	682221	Reason 1, 7. Certified letter received. Vessel only made one trip during selection period and took NBC film crew so there was no bunk for observer. POP requested 14 sets for the quarter.
SEA QUEEN III	995485	Reason 7. Certified letter received. Approach and aftermath of Hurricane Gustav prevented vessel from fishing for much of quarter. POP requested 8 sets for the quarter. Vessel departure reported on 7/6.

Table 5 (continued): Listing of selected vessels that were not covered by Pelagic Observer Program (POP) during Quarter 3, 2008 (July 1 to September 30). Short explanations provided. Vessel non-compliance of observer coverage may be based on more than one category of explanation.

The following categories are provided: (1)No bunk available;(2)Observer presence exceeds the liferaft capacity;(3) Lack of current CFVSE decal;(4)No communication with observer office/staff; (5)Not fishing (involved in another fishery);(6)Not fishing (new owner, repair, sunk, no permits); and (7)other.

<u>Vessel Name</u>	<u>Doc #</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
SEVEN ARROWS	611304	Reasons 5, 7. Certified letter received. Vessel only made one trip during selection period, and no observer was available. POP requested 5 sets for the quarter. Vessel departure reported 7/3.
ST. PAUL PETER	929437	Reason 6. Certified letter received. Vessel did not fish during selection period. POP requested 8 sets for the quarter.
TAR BABY	989329	Reason 6. Certified letter received. Vessel did not fish during selection period. POP requested 3 sets for the quarter.
TIKI XIV	512432	Reason 7. Certified letter received. POP sent observer to vessel, but weather delayed trip and observer was no longer available. POP requested 3 sets for the quarter. Vessel reported departures on 7/2, 7/25, 8/3, 9/4.
WESTPORT SWORD	913309	Reasons 1, 6. Certified letter received. No bunk for observer early in quarter, and then vessel was put up for sale. POP requested 4 sets for the quarter. Departures reported 7/2, 7/16, 8/8.

Table 6: The POP coverage completed aboard the pelagic longline fleet by quarter and year since the publication of the 2004 Biological Opinion. The number of trips observed include vessels that are covered multiple times during a quarter. The number of unique vessels observed represents those vessels only covered at least once by an observer.

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Quarter	Year	No. of Vessels Selected	No. of Trips Observed	No. of Unique Vessels Observed
3	2004	44	29	29
4	2004	30	28	14
1	2005	34	26	12
2	2005	45	22	9
3	2005	41	19	7
4	2005	28	14	1
1	2006	31	20	4
2	2006	33	23	2
3	2006	39	22	2
4	2006	24	17	1
1	2007	20	17	1
2	2007	65	43	4
3	2007	42	28	4
4	2007	29	20	1
1	2008	81	33	1
2	2008	77	79	4
3	2008	46	28	3
Cumulative Totals			468	99

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